

Old Diary Leaves

Chapter I

First Meeting Of The Founders

Since I am to tell the story of the birth in progress of the Theosophical Society, I must begin at the beginning, and tell how its two founders first met. It was a very prosaic incident: I said "Permettez moi, Madame, and gave her a light for her cigarette; our acquaintance began in smoke, but it stirred up a great and permanent fire. The circumstances which brought us together were peculiar, as I shall presently explain. The facts of been partly published before.

One day, in the month of July, 1874, I was sitting in my law office thinking over a heavy case in which I had been retained by the Corporation of the City of New York, when it occurred to me that for years I had paid no attention to the Spiritualist Movement. I do not know what association of ideas made my mind pass from the mechanical construction of water meters to Modern Spiritualism, but, at all the events, I went around the corner to a dealer's and bought a copy of the *Banner Of Light*. In it I read an account of certain incredible phenomena, viz., the solidification of phantom forms, which were said to be occurring at a farmhouse in the township of Chittenden, in the state of Vermont, several hundred miles distant from New York. I saw at once that, if it were true that visitors could see, even touch and converse with, deceased relatives who had found means to reconstruct their bodies and clothing so as to be temporarily solid, visible, and tangible, this was the most important fact in modern physical science. I determined to go and see for myself. I did so, found the story true, stopped three or four days, and then returned to New York. I wrote an account of my observations to *The New York Sun*, which was copied pretty much throughout the whole world, so grave and interesting were the facts. A proposal was then made to me by the editor of *The New York Daily Graphic* to return to Chittenden in its interest, accompanied by an artist to sketch under my orders, and to make a thorough investigation of the affair. The matter so deeply interested me that I made the necessary disposition of office engagements, and on September 17th was back at the "Eddy Homestead," as it was called from the name of the family who owned and occupied it. I stopped in that house of mystery, surrounded by phantoms and having daily experiences of the most extraordinary character, for about twelve weeks--if my memory serves me. Meanwhile, twice a week there appeared in *The Daily Graphic* my letters about the "Eddy Ghosts," each one illustrated with sketches of spectres actually seen by the artist, Mr. Kappes, and myself, as well as by every one of the persons--sometimes as many as forty--present in the "seance-room." It was the publication of these letters which drew Madame Blavatsky to Chittenden, and so brought us together.

I remember our first day's acquaintance as if it were yesterday; besides which, I have recorded the main facts in my book (*People From The Other World*, pages. 293 et seq). It was a sunny

day and even the gloomy old farmhouse looked cheerful. It stands amid a lovely landscape, in a valley bounded by grassy slopes that rise into mountains covered to their very crests with leafy groves. This is the time of the "Indian Summer," when the whole country is covered with a faint bluish haze, like that which has given the "Nilgiri" mountains their name, and the foliage of the beeches, elms, and maples, touched by early frosts, has been turned from green into a mottling of gold and crimson that gives the landscape the appearance of being hung all over with royal tapestries. One must go to America to see this autumnal splendour in its full perfection.

The dinner hour at Eddie's was noon, and it was from the entrance door of the bare and comfortless dining room that Kappes and I first saw H.P.B. She had arrived shortly before noon with a French Canadian lady, and they were at table as we entered. My eye was first attracted by a scarlet Garibaldian shirt the former wore, as in vivid contrast with the dull colors around. Her hair was then a thick blond mop, worn shorter than the shoulders, and it stood out from her head, silken-soft and crinkled to the roots, like the fleece of a Cotswold ewe. This and the red shirt were what struck my attention before I took in the picture of her features. It was a massive Calmuck face, contrasting in its suggestion of power, culture, and imperiousness, and strangely with the commonplace visages about the room as her red garment did with the gray and white tones of the walls and woodwork and the dull costumes of the rest of the guests. All sorts of cranky people were continually coming and going at Eddie's to see the mediumistic phenomena, and it only struck me on seeing this eccentric lady that this was but one more of the sort. Pausing on the doorsill, I whispered to Kappes, "Good gracious! Look at that specimen, will you." I went straight across into the seat opposite her to indulge my favorite habit of character study. The two ladies conversed in French, making remarks of no consequence, but I saw at once from her accent and fluency of speech that, if not a Parisian, she must at least be a finished French scholar. Dinner over, the two went outside the house and Madame Blavatsky rolled herself a cigarette, for which I gave her a light as a pretext to enter into conversation. My remark having been made in French, we fell at once into talk in that language. She asked me how long I had been there and what I thought of the phenomena; saying that she herself was greatly interested in such things, and had been drawn to Chittenden by reading the letters in the *Daily Graphic*: the public were growing so interested in these that it was sometimes impossible to find a copy of the paper on the bookstalls an hour after publication, and she had paid a dollar for a copy of the last issue. "I hesitated before coming here," she said, "because I was afraid of meeting that Colonel Olcott." "Why should you be afraid of him, Madame?" I rejoined. "Oh! Because I fear he might write about me in his paper." I told her that she might make herself perfectly easy on that score, for I felt sure Colonel Olcott could not mention her in his letters unless she wished it. And I introduced myself. We became friends at once. Each of us felt as if we were of the same social world, cosmopolitans, free-thinkers, and in closer touch than the rest of the company, intelligent and very worthy as some of them were. It was the voice of common sympathy with the higher occult side of man and nature; the attraction of soul to soul, not that of sex to sex. Neither then, at the commencement, nor ever afterwards had either of us the sense of the other being of the opposite sex. We were simply chums; so regarded each other, so called each other. Some base people from time to time, dared to suggest that a closer tie bound us together, as they had that that poor, malformed, persecuted

H.P.B. had been the mistress of various other men, but no pure person could hold to such an opinion after passing any time in her company, and seeing how her every look, word, and action proclaimed her sexlessness.

Strolling along with my new acquaintance, we talk together about the Eddy phenomena and those of other lands. I found she had been a great traveler and seen many occult things and adepts in occult science, but at first she did not give me any hint as to the existence of the Himalayan Sages or of her own powers. She spoke of the materialistic tendency of American Spiritualism, which was a sort of debauch of phenomena accompanied by comparative indifference to philosophy. Her manner was gracious and captivating, her criticisms upon men and things original and witty. She was particularly interested in drawing me out as to my own ideas about spiritual things and expressed pleasure in finding that I had instinctively thought along the occult lines which she herself had pursued. It was not as an Eastern mystic, but rather as a refined Spiritualist that she talked. For my part I knew nothing then, or next to nothing, about Eastern philosophy, and at first she kept silent on that subject.

The seances of William Eddy, the chief medium of the family, were held every evening in a large upstairs hall, in a wing of the house, over the dining room and kitchen. He and a brother, Horatio, were hard-working farmers; Horatio attending to the outdoor duties, and William, since visitors came pouring in upon them from all parts of the United States, doing the cooking for the household. They were poor, ill-educated, and prejudiced--sometimes surly to their unbidden guests. At the farther end of the séance hall the deep chimney from the kitchen below passed through to the roof. Between it and the north wall was a narrow closet of the same width as the depth of the chimney, two feet seven inches, in which William Eddy would seat himself to wait for the phenomena. He had no seeming control over them, but merely sat and waited for them to sporadically occur. A blanket being hung across the doorway, the closet would be in perfect darkness. Shortly after William had entered the cabinet, the blanket would be pulled aside and forth would step some figure of a dead man, woman or child--an animate statue so to say--temporarily solid and substantial, but the next minute resolved back into nothingness or invisibility. They would occasionally dissolve away while on full view of the spectators.

Up to the time of H.P.B.'s appearance on the scene, the figures which had shown themselves were either Red Indians, or Americans or Europeans akin to visitors. But on the first evening of her stay spooks of other nationalities came before us. There was a Georgian servant boy from the Caucasus; a Muslim merchant from Tiflis; a Russian peasant girl, and others. Another evening there appeared a Kourdish cavalier armed with scimitar, pistols, and lance; a hideously ugly and devilish-looking Negro sorcerer from Africa, wearing a coronet composed of four horns of the oryx with bells at their tips, attached to an embroidered, highly colored fillet which was tied around his head; and a European gentleman wearing the cross and collar of St. Anne, who was recognised by Madame Blavatsky as her uncle. The advent of such figures in the seance room of those poor, almost illiterate Vermont farmers, who had neither the money to buy theatrical properties, the experience to employ such if they had had them, nor the room

where they could have availed of them, was to every eyewitness a convincing proof that the apparitions were genuine. At the same time they show that a strange attraction to call out these images from what Asiatics call the Kama-Loka attended Madame Blavatsky. It was long afterwards that I was informed that she had evoked them by her own developed and masterful power. She even affirms the fact in a written note, to *T. S. Scrapbook*, Vol. 1, appended to a cutting from the (London) *Spiritualist* of January, 1875.

While she was at Chittenden she told me many incidents of her past life, among others, her having been present as a volunteer, with a number of other European ladies, with Garibaldi at the bloody battle of Mentana. In proof of her story she showed me where her left arm had been broken into places by a sabre stroke, and made me feel in her right shoulder a musket bullet still embedded in the muscle, and another in her leg. She also showed me a scar just below the heart where she had been stabbed with a stiletto. This wound reopened a little while she was at Chittenden, and it was to consult me about it that she was led to show it to me. She told me many curious tales of peril and adventure, among them the story of the phantom African sorcerer with the oryx-horn coronet, whom she had seen in life doing phenomena in Upper Egypt, many years before.

H.P.B. tried to best to make me suspect the value of William Eddy's phenomena as proofs of the intelligent control of the medium by spirits; telling me that, if genuine, they must be the double of the medium escaping from his body and clothing itself with other appearances; but I did not believe her. I contended that the forms were of two great diversities of height, bulk, and appearance to be a masquerade of William Eddy; they must be what they seemed, *viz.*, the spirits of the dead. Our disputes were quite warm on occasions, for at that time I had not gone deep enough into the question of the plastic nature of the human double to see the force of her hints, while of the Eastern theory of Maya I did not know its least iota. The result, however, was, and she told me, to convince her of my disposition to accept nothing on trust and to cling pertinaciously to such facts as I had, or thought I had acquired. We became great friends day-by-day, and by the time she was ready to leave Chittenden she had accepted from me the nickname " Jack, " and so signed herself in her letters to me from New York. When we parted it was as good friends likely to continue the acquaintance thus pleasantly begun.

In November, 1874, when my researches were finished, I returned to New York and called upon her at her lodgings at 16 Irving Place, where she gave me some séances of table-tipping and rapping, spelling out messages of sorts, principally from an Invisible intelligence calling itself " John King." This pseudonym is one that has been familiar to frequenters of mediumistic seances be these forty years past, all the world. It was first heard of in 1850, in the " spirit room " of Jonathan Koons, of Ohio, where it pretended to be a ruler of a tribe or tribes of spirits. Later on, it said it was the earth-haunting soul of Sir Henry Morgan, the famous buccaneer, and as such it introduced itself to me. It showed its face and turban-wrapped head to me at Philadelphia, during the course of my investigations of the Holmes mediums, in association with the late respected Robert Dale Owen, General F. J. been Lippett and Madame Blavatsky (*vide People From The Other World*, Part 2.), and both spoke and wrote to me,

the latter frequently. It had a quaint handwriting, and used queer old English expressions. I thought it a veritable John King then, for its personality had been as convincingly proved to me, I fancy, as anybody could have asked. But now, after seeing what H.P.B. could do in the way of producing *mayavic* (i.e., hypnotic) illusions and in the control of elementals, I am persuaded that "John King" then a humbugging elemental, worked by her like a marionette and used as a help toward my education. Understand me, the phenomena were real, but there were done by no disincarnate human spirit. Since writing the above, in fact, I have found the proof, in her own handwriting, pasted in our back *Scrapbook*, Vol 1

She kept up the illusion for months--just how many I cannot recollect at this distance of time--and I saw numbers of phenomena done as alleged by John King--as, for example, the whole remarkable series at the Philadelphia residence of the Holmeses and that of H.P.B. herself, above referred to. He was first, John King, an independent personality, then John King, messenger and servant--never the equal--of living adepts, and finally an elemental pure and simple, employed by H.P.B. and certain other expert in the doing of wonders.

It is useless to deny that, throughout the early part of her American residence, she called herself a Spiritualist and warmly defended Spiritualism and its mediums from their sciolistic and other bitter but traducers. Her letters and articles in various American and English journals contain many evidences of her occupying that position. Among other examples, I was simply quote to the following:

"As it is, I have only done my duty; first, toward Spiritualism, that I have defended as well as I could from the attacks of imposture under the too transparent mask of science; then towards two helpless, slandered mediums. . . . But I am obliged to confess that I really do not believe in having done any good--to Spiritualism itself. . . . It is with a profound sadness in my heart that I acknowledge this fact, for I begin to think there is no help for it. For over fifteen years have I fought my battle for the blessed truth; have traveled and preached it--though I never was born for a lecturer--from the snow-covered tops of the Caucasian Mountains, as well as from the sandy valleys of the Nile. I have proved the truth of it practically and by persuasion. For the sake of Spiritualism I have left my home, and easy life amongst a civilized society, and have become a wanderer upon the face of the earth. I had already seen my hopes realized, beyond my most sanguine expectations, when my unlucky star brought me to America. Knowing this country to be the cradle of modern Spiritualism, I came over here from France with feelings not unlike those about Mohammadan approaching the birthplace of his Prophet," etc. etc. (letter of H.P.B. to the be back of December 13, 1874.)

The two "helpless mediums" alluded to were the Holmeses, of whose moral quality I have always had the poorest opinion. Yet, in H.P.B.'s presence I witnessed, under my own test conditions, along with the late Robert Dale Owen and General Lippett, a series of most convincing and satisfactory mediumistic phenomena. I half suspected then that the power that produce them came from H.P.B., and that if the Holmeses alone had been concerned, I should either have seen tricks or nothing. Now in hunting over the old scrap-books, I find in H.P.B.'s MSS the following memorandum, which she evidently meant to be published after her death:

" Important Note

Yes, I am sorry to say that I had to identify myself, during that shameful exposure of the Holmes mediums, with the Spiritualists. I had to save the situation, for *I was sent from Paris to America on purpose to prove the phenomena and the reality, and show the fallacy of the spiritualistic theory of spirits.* But how could I do best? I did not want people at large to know that I could produce the same things that will. I had received orders to the contrary, and yet I had to keep alive the reality, the genuineness and possibility of such phenomena, in the hearts of those who from Materialists had turned Spiritualist, but now, owing to the exposure of several mediums, fell back again, returned to their skepticism. This is why, selecting a few of the faithful, I went to the Holmeses, and, helped by M. and his power, brought out the faces of John King and Katie King from the Astral Light, produced the phenomena of materializations, and allowed the Spiritualists at large to believe it was done through the medium of Mrs. Holmes. She was terribly frightened herself, for she knew that this once the apparition was real. Did I do wrong? The world is not prepared yet to understand the philosophy of Occult Science; let them first assure themselves that there are beings in an invisible world, whether "Spiri's " of the dead or elementals; and that there are hidden powers in man which are capable of making a *god* of him on earth.

" When I am dead and gone people will, perhaps, appreciate my disinterested motives. I have pledged my word to help people on the Truth while living, and I'll keep my word. That them abuse and revile me; that some call me a medium and Spiritualist, others an impostor. The day will come when posterity will learn to know me better. Oh, poor, foolish, credulous, wicked world! "

The whole thing is here made plain: the Spiritualism she was sent to America to profess and ultimately bring to replace the cruder Western mediumism, with Eastern Spiritualism, or Brahma Vidya. The West not being prepared to accept it, her first assigned work was to defend the real phenomena of the " circle " from that prejudiced and militant enemy of spiritual belief-- materialistic, sciolistic, physical science, with its votaries and leaders. The one necessary thing for the age was to check materialistic scepticism and strengthen the spiritual basis of the religious yearning. Therefore, the battle being joined, she took her stand beside the American Spiritualists, and for the moment made common cause with them. Yes, posterity *will* do her justice.

I wish I could recall to memory the first phenomena done by her confessedly by an exercise of her own willpower, but I cannot. It must have been just after she began writing *Isis Unveiled* and possibly it was the following: After leaving 16 Irving Place and making a visit to friends in the country, she occupied rooms for a time in another house in Irving Place, a few doors from the Lotos Club and on the same side of the street. It was there that, later, the informal gathering of friends was held at which I proposed the formation of what afterwards became the

Theosophical Society. Among her callers was an Italian artist, a Signor B., formerly a Corbonaro. I was sitting alone with her in her drawing room when he made his first visit. They talked of Italian affairs, and he suddenly pronounced the name of one of the greatest of the adepts. She started as if she had received an electric shock; looked him straight in the eyes and said (in Italian) "What is it? I am ready." He passed it off carelessly, but thenceforward the talk was all about Magic, Magicians, and Adepts. Signor B. went and opened one of the French windows, made some beckoning passes toward the outer air, and presently a pure white butterfly came into the room and went flying about near the ceiling. It H.P.B. laughed in a cheerful way and said: "That is pretty, but I can also do it!" She, too, opened the window, made similar beckoning passes, and presently a second white butterfly came fluttering in. It mounted to the ceiling, chased the other around the room, played with it now and then, with it flew into a corner, and, presto! Both disappeared at once while we were looking at them. "What does that mean?" I asked. "Only this, that Signor B. can make an elemental turn itself into a butterfly, and so can I." The insects were not real but illusionary ones.

I recall other instances of her control of elementals or, as Hindus would term it, Yakshini Vidya. An early one is the following: on a cold winter's night, when several inches of snow lay upon the ground, she and I were working upon her book until a late hour at her rooms in thirty-fourth Street. I had eaten some saltish food for dinner, and at about 1:00 a.m., feeling very thirsty said to her: "Would it not be nice to have some hothouse grapes?" "So it would," she replied, "let us have some." "But the shops have been closed for hours, and we can buy none," I said. "No matter, we shall have them, all the same," was her reply. "But how?" "I will show you, if you will just turn down that gas-light on the table in front of us." I turned the cock and unintentionally so far around as to extinguish the fire. "You need not have done that," she said. "I only wanted you to make the light dim. However, light it again quickly." A box of matches laid just at hand, and in a moment I had relit the lamp. "See!" She exclaimed, pointing to a hanging bookshelf on the wall before us. To my amazement there hung from the knobs at the two ends of one of the shelves two large bunches of ripe black Hamburgh grapes, which we proceeded to eat. To my question as to the agency employed, she said it was done by certain elementals under her control, and twice later on, when we were living in the so-called "Lamasery," she repeated the phenomenon of bringing fruits for our refreshment while at work on *Isis*.

Little by little, H.P.B. let me know of the existence of Eastern Adepts and their powers, and gave me by a multitude of phenomena the proofs of her own control over the occult forces of nature. At first, as I remarked, she ascribed them to "John King," and it was through his alleged friendliness that I first came into personal correspondence with the Masters. Many of their letters I have preserved, with my own endorsement of the dates of their reception. For years, and until shortly before I left New York for India, I was connected in pupilage with the African section of the Occult Brotherhood; but, later, when a certain wonderful psycho-physiological changes happened to H.P.B. that I am not at liberty to speak about, and that nobody has up to the present suspected, although enjoying her intimacy and the full confidence, as they fancy, I was transferred to the Indian section and a different group of Masters. For, it

may be stated, there is and ever was but one altruistic alliance, or fraternity, of these Elder Brothers of humanity, the world over; but it is divided into sections according to the needs of the human race in its successive stages of evolution. In one age the focal center of this world-helping force will be in one place, in another elsewhere. Unseen, and suspected as the vivifying spiritual currents of the Akash, yet as indispensable for the spiritual welfare of mankind, their combined divine energy is maintained from age to age and forever refreshes the pilgrim of earth, who struggles on towards the divine reality. The sceptic denies the existence of these Adepts because he has not seen or talked with them, nor read the history of their visible intermeddling in national events. But their being has been known to thousands of self-illuminate mystics and philanthropists in succeeding generations, whose purified souls have lifted them up out of the muck of physical into the brightness of spiritual consciousness; and at many epochs they have come into personal relations with the persons who are devoting or inclined to devote themselves to altruistic labor for bringing about the brotherhood of mankind. Some of this class, very humble and apparently very unworthy--like us leaders of the Theosophical Society Movement--have been blessed with their sympathy and partaken of their instruction. Some, like Damodar and H.P.B, have first seen them in visions while young; some have encountered them under strange guises in most unlikely places; I was introduced to them by H.P.B. through the agency that my previous experiences would make most comprehensible, a pretended medium--overshadowing " spirit. " John King brought four of the Masters to my attention, of whom one was a Copt, one a representative of the neo-Platonist Alexandrian school, one--a very high one, a master of the Masters, so say--a Venetian, and one an English philosopher, gone from men sight, yet not dead. The first of these became my first Guru, and a stern disciplinarian he was, indeed a man of splendid masculinity of character .

In time I came to know from themselves that H.P.B. was a faithful servant of theirs, though her peculiar temperament and idiosyncrasies made her too antipathetic to some of them to permit of their working with her. This will not seem strange if one remembers that each individual man, whether adept or laic, has evolved along a particular ray of the Logos, and is in spiritual sympathy with his associate souls of that Ray, and may be in antagonism, on this physical plane, with entities of another ray when cloaked in flesh. This is possibly the *ultima ratio* of what is called magnetic, auric, or psychical sympathy and antipathy. Whatever the reason may be some of the Masters could not and did not work with H.P.B. Several did, among them some whose names have never as yet been given out, but whom I had much intercourse with in those early years of the Theosophical Society Movement.

Among other things about herself H.P.B. told me, when I had got along the far enough to know of the Brotherhood and her relations with it, that she had come to Paris the previous year (1873) intending to settle down for some time under the protection of a relative of hers, residing in the *Rue de l'Université* when she received from the " Brother's " a peremptory order to go to New York to await further orders.

The next day she had sailed with little more than money enough to pay her passage. She wrote to her father for funds to be sent her in care of the Russian Consul in New York, but this could

not arrive for some time, and as the Consul refused her a loan, she had to set up to work to earn her daily bread. She told me she had taken lodgings in one of the poorest quarters in New York--Madison St.--and supported herself by making cravats or artificial flowers--I forget which now--for a kind-hearted Hebrew shop-keeper. She always spoke to me with gratitude about this little man. As yet she had received no intimation as to the future, it was a sealed book. But the following year, in October 1874, she was ordered to go to Chittenden and find the man who, as it turned out, was to be her future colleague in a great work--myself.

Her intimate friends will recollect her telling the story about her sudden departure under orders from Paris to New York. Mr. Sinnett mentions it in his *Incidents in the Life of Mme Blavatsky* (page 175), and it has been elsewhere published. But these acquaintances had it from her later on, and enemies may say it was an afterthought of hers, a falsehood concocted to fit in with a little farce she subsequently invented. Accident, however,--if it be an accident--has just now, while I am writing these pages, brought me a valuable bit of corroborative proof. We have had staying at Adyar an American lady, Miss Anna Ballard, a veteran journalist, a life member of the New York Press Club, who, in the course of professional duty, met H.P.B. in the first week after her arrival at York. In the course of conversation, amid a variety of less important facts, Ms. Ballard casually mentioned to me two, that I at once begged her to put in writing, viz. " That H.P.B., whom she found living in a squalid lodging-house, said that she had suddenly and unexpectedly left Paris at one day's notice, and, secondly, that she had visited Tibet. Here is Ms. Ballard's own version of the affair:

" Adyar, January 17, 1892

"Dear Colonel Olcott:--my acquaintanceship with the Mme. Blavatsky dates even further back than you suppose. I met her in July 1873, at New York, not more than a week after she landed. I was then a reporter on the staff of the *New York Sun*, and had been detailed to write an article on a Russian subject. In the course of my search after facts the arrival of this Russian lady was reported to me by a friend, and I called upon her; thus beginning an acquaintance that lasted several years. At our first interview she told me she had had no idea of leaving Paris for America until the very evening before she sailed, but why she came or who hurried her off she did not say. I remember perfectly well her saying with an air of exultation, " I have been in Tibet." Why she should think that a great matter, more remarkable than any other of the travels in Egypt, India, and other countries she told me about, I could not make out, but she said it with special emphasis and animation. I now know, of course, what it means.
Anna Ballard "

Unless prepared to concede to H.P.B. the power of foreseeing that I should be getting this written statement from Miss Ballard in India, nineteen years later, the fair-minded reader will admit that the statements she made to her first friend in New York, in 1873, strongly corroborate the assertions she has ever since made to a large number of people about the two most important incidences in the history of her connection with the Theosophical movement, (a)

her preparation in Tibet, and (b) her journey to America in search of the person whose karma linked him to her as the co-agent to set this social wave in motion.

She made an abortive attempt to found a sort of spiritual society in Cairo, in 1871 (*vide* Peebles, *Around The World*, page 215, and Sinnett's *Incidents In The Life Of Mme Blavatsky*, page 158), upon a basis of phenomena. Not having the right persons to organize and direct it, it was a lamentable fiasco and brought upon her much ridicule. Yet the magical phenomena she wrought with the help of the self-same Copt and another adept whom I subsequently came into relations with, were most startling.¹ It was apparently a reckless waste of psychic energy, and indicated anything but either personal infallibility or divine guidance. I could never understand it. And as regards the Theosophical Society every circumstance tends to show that it has been a gradual evolution, controlled by circumstances and the resultant of opposite forces, now running into smooth, now into rough grooves, and prosperous or checked proportionately with the wisdom or un-wisdom of its management. The general direction has always been kept, its guiding motive ever identical, but its program has been variously modified, enlarged, and improved as our knowledge increased and experience from time to time suggested. All things show me that the movement as such was planned out beforehand by the watching Sages, but all details were left for us to conquer as best we might. If we had failed, others would have had the chance that fell to our karma, as I fell heir to the wasted chances of her Cairo group in 1871. Speaking of growth of knowledge, I can look back and trace a

¹See an article in Frank Leslie's popular magazine for February 1892, illustrated by mendacious engravings, yet containing a few facts along with much falsehood. The author, Dr. A. L. Rawson, mentions the Cairo failure of the " attempt to form a Society for Occult research, " and says that " Paulos Metamon, a celebrated Coptic Magician, who had several very curious books full of astrological formulas, magical incantations and horoscopes which he delighted in showing his visitors, *after a proper introduction* " advised the delay. Dr. Rawson says that she (H.P.B.) had told the Countess Kazinoff " that she had solved at least one of the mysteries of Egypt, and proved it by letting a live serpent loose from a bag she had concealed in the folds of her dress. " From an eyewitness I had it that while H.P.B. was in Cairo the most extraordinary phenomena would occur in any room she might be sitting in; for example, the table lamp would quit its place on one table and pass through the air to another, just as if carried to some one's hand; the same mysterious Copt would suddenly vanish from the sofa where he was sitting, and many such marvels. Miracles no longer, since we have had the scientists prove to us the possibility of inhibition of the senses of sight, hearing, touch, and smell by mere hypnotic suggestion. Undoubtedly this inhibition was provoked in the company present, who were made to see the Copt vanish, and the lamp moving through space, but not the person whose hand was carrying it. It was what H.P.B. called a " psychological trick, " yet all the same a fact and one moment to science. Scientists attest the fact of inhibition yet confess ignorance as to its rationale. " How " --say Drs. Binet and Féré, in their celebrated work *Le Magnétisme Animal* --has the experimentalist produced this curious phenomenon? We know nothing about it. We only grasp the external fact, to know that when one affirms to a sensitive subject that an object present does not exist, this suggestion has the effect, direct or indirect, to dig in the brain of the hypnotic an anesthesia corresponding to the designated object. But what happens between the verbal affirmation, which is the means, and the systematized anesthesia, which is the end? . . . Here the laws of association, which are so great a help in solving psychological problems, abandon us completely." Poor beginners! They do not see that the inhibition is upon the astral man, and Eastern magicians excel them in "psychological tricks" simply because they know more about psychology, and can reach the Watcher who peers out upon the foolish world of illusion through the windows of the body: the telephonic nerves being inhibited, the telegraphic wires are cut, and no message passes in.

constant enlargement of my own ideas, deeper perception of truth, and capacity to assimilate and impart ideas. My published articles and letters between 1875 and 1878 prove this distinctly. When I was a child (in Occultism) I spoke as a child; often dogmatically, after the fashion of comparative tyros.

I never heard anything from H.P.B. in the early days to make me think that she had the least intimation, until sent to Chittenden to me, about any future relationship between us in work, nor even then that the Theosophical Society was to be. We have it on her own authority, as quoted above, that she was sent from Paris to New York in the interest of Spiritualism, in the best sense of that word, and before we met she had attended séances and consorted with mediums, but never came under public notice. In May, 1875, I was engaged in trying to organize at New York with her concurrence a private investigating committee under the title of the “Miracle Club.” In the *Scrap-book* (Vol. I.) she writes about it:

“An attempt in consequence of orders received from T*B* (a Master) through P. (an Elemental) personating John King. Ordered to begin telling the public the truth about the phenomena and their mediums. And now my martyrdom will begin! I shall have all the Spiritualists against me, in addition to the Christians and Sceptics. The will, Oh M., be done. H.P.B.”

The plan was to keep closed doors to all save the members of the Club, who were forbidden to divulge even the place of meeting. “All the manifestations, including materializations, to occur in the light, and without a cabinet.” (*Spiritual Scientist*, May 19, 1876.) Taking H.P.B.’s remark above, as written, it looks as though there would have been no Theosophical Society—it looks so, I say—if her intended medium for the Miracle Club had not utterly failed us and so precluded my completing the organization.

I notice in Mr. Sinnett’s book the coincidence she arrived at New York on the 7th of July, 1873—that is to say on the *seventh* day of the *seventh* month of her forty-second year (6X7), and that our meeting was postponed until I should have attained my forty-second year. And, to anticipate, it must also be remarked that she died in the *seventh* month of the seventeenth year of our Theosophical relationship. Add to this the further fact, recently published by me in the *Theosophist*, that Mrs. Annie Besant came to H.P.B. as an applicant for membership in the seventh month of the seventeenth year after her final withdrawal from the Christian communion, and we have here a pretty set of coincidences to bear in mind.